

Abstract of the Disclosure

5 A method and apparatus are disclosed for operating an eVOA by modulating its
attenuation. If an optical signal power is below a loss of signal (LOS) power threshold the
eVOA attenuation is set to a maximum attenuation and then, periodically and quickly
decreased and increased in steps while checking for the presence of optical signals above the
LOS power threshold. The method is also used for operating a multiplicity of eVOAs while
10 minimizing the risk of damage to optical network equipment.